

THRA

TASMANIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

President:	Caroline Homer	0400 826 629
Vice-President:	Ros Escott	6223 6398
Secretary:	Chris Tassell	6278 9058
Treasurer:	Rupert Manners	treasurer@thra.org.au
Editor:	Alison Alexander	6223 7762

Correspondence should be sent to: PO Box 441, Sandy Bay, 7006 or thra@thra.org.au

Website: www.thra.org.au

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/thra1951

NEWSLETTER NO. 126

April 2026

MEETING CALENDAR 2026

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| 14 April | Graeme Broxam
Competition vs Cooperation: The Holyman Story |
| 12 May | Helene Chung
A Tasmanian Life |
| 9 June | Kathy Rundle
Early Quakers in Tasmania and the establishment of The Friends School |
| 14 July | Grant Finlay
Returning Fire to Country: the role of history in supporting Aboriginal burning in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area |
| 11 August | Dean Greeno
Pakana connections to country and sea |
| 8 September | Alessandro Antonello
Coal in Antarctica: an unignited history |
| 13 October | Alison Alexander
Not so squeaky clean after all: William Sorell in Van Diemen's Land |
| 10 November | Louise Zarmati
Who was Wauba Debar? |
| 8 December | Bill Lawson
The Tasman Bridge disaster and its aftermath |

NEW and RETURNING MEMBERS

Patrica Barwick of New Town
Ashley Blakesley of Sandy Bay
Angela Briant of Lindisfarne
Katherine Bullen of Victoria (*winner of the 2025 Michael Roe Prize in Australian History*)
Georgina Crisp of Ardeer, Victoria

Robert King of Narrabundah, ACT
Sharmaine Kruijver of Glenorchy
Christine Ludford of South Hobart
Allan Myers of Dunkeld, Victoria
Janine Tan of West Hobart

MICHAEL ROE PRIZE IN AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

Every year, THRA sponsors an award given to a history student at the University of Tasmania. This prize, the **Michael Roe Prize in Australian History**, is named in honour of the association's patron and is awarded to the student with the highest grade in the second year Australian History unit.

In 2025, Katherine Bullen was awarded the prize. Katherine received \$500 and a twelve-month membership to THRA. Congratulations Katherine!

IDEAS FOR PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS

For our journal, as well as the usual historical papers it's interesting to have people's memories of their lives in Tasmania, their jobs, how life has changed and so on. If anyone would like to write such a paper, do get in touch with me. Don't be modest! Email: Alison.Alexander@utas.edu.au

UPCOMING EXCURSIONS

The THRA Committee is organising a program of exciting tours and excursions for THRA members over the coming months. Some will have limited capacity and we anticipate they will be very popular, so make sure you watch your email for the opportunity to peek behind the scenes of some of Tasmania's fascinating institutions.

EXCURSION REPORT: SOUTH HOBART WALKING TOUR

In March, members of THRA were treated to a perambulation around the old suburb of South Hobart.

Kevin Green bravely offered to run this excursion twice on the same day when the first one booked out so quickly. His walking tour covered the block bordered by Elboden St, Macquarie St, Antill St and Davey St, which is steeped in fascinating history, intrigues and tales that Kevin told so well.

THE MORAN AWARD FOR HISTORY OF SCIENCE RESEARCH

Are you, or do you know, a postgraduate student or other researcher with expertise in the history of Australian science?

Applications for the biennial **Moran Award for History of Science Research** from the Australian Academy of Science are now open. This fund offers up to \$10,000 to support access to archives for research into the history of science. More information about the award and applying can be found at science.org.au/our-work/awards-programs/awards-opportunities/moran-award-history-science-research

COMPLIANCE OR DEFIANCE: WORKING THE SYSTEM

How did convict women cope with the convict system in Van Diemen's Land?

Female Convicts Research Centre Seminar, Sunday 3 May 2026, 9am – 3pm, at the Stanley Burbury Theatre, University of Tasmania.

Attendance in person: \$60 plus 50c booking fee, includes morning tea and lunch.

Zoom webinar attendance: \$40.00, plus 50c booking fee.

To book, go to the FCRC website: femaleconvicts.org.au/fcrc-seminars/seminar-registration

TASMANIAN FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY AGM and CONFERENCE

You are all invited to attend the **Tasmanian Family History Society Conference and AGM**, Saturday 20 June 2026, at Rydges Hotel, 393 Argyle Street, North Hobart. Come and hear Brad Williams speak about the Queenborough Cemetery exhumation process; Christine Woods on the multi-generational story of the Ellis Family as they lived across Tasmania in the nineteenth century; and Ros Escott who will share her experience of writing the lives of convict women, with practical advice for everyone listening.

Registration is essential and costs \$50, which includes catering, conference and choice of optional Sunday morning tours. Find the program, details about the tours, and registration at tasfhs.org/AGM_2026.php

WHO WAS RODDA?

Anne Thwaites would like to know if anyone has any information about **Rodda's Run**, 5,500 acres on the Central Plateau, and the **Rodda's Tin Hut** built there in the early 1900s. If you can help, please ring Anne on 6227 9368.

Should gasoline and oil prices rise 100 per cent... in 1921

In 1921, Harley Davidson salesman Sim King of 63 Brisbane Street Launceston, boldly declared that the Harley-Davidson and its sidecar were a family vehicle. "How can I take my family out for frequent trips, outing and picnics comfortably, yet economically?"

At present costs, the Harley-Davidson sidecar outfit operates for very little more than one cent a mile. Should gasoline and oil prices rise 100 per cent you would still use your machine for much less than railroad fare per mile. One owes his family such pleasures as the Harley-Davidson affords in such great measure. If you put your savings into a HARLEY OUTFIT you will gain in health and pleasure far more than the tiny sum of INTEREST your savings would otherwise return.

The Examiner, 13 August, 1921, p.14